



DEFIANT  
1  
OCTOBER  
\$2.50  
\$3.25 CANADA

# DARK DOMINION™



# "THE GATHERING DARKNESS"

HAUNTS OF THE  
VERY RICH  
Part One

CREATED BY JIM SHOOTER

MIDTOWN MANHATTAN,  
ON BROADWAY NEAR  
WEST 46TH STREET

5:56 P.M.



FOR YEARS THIS CITY'S  
BEEN GETTING WORSE.  
ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.

BARELY PAST SUNDOWN,  
AND ALREADY THE FEAR  
IS SO THICK, YOU CAN  
POUR IT ON PANCAKES.

NO  
PARKING  
6pm-9pm

# McDonald's



THE PEOPLE WHO PREY  
ON OTHERS ARE OUT IN  
FORCE....

AND THE THINGS THAT  
PREY ON THEM...

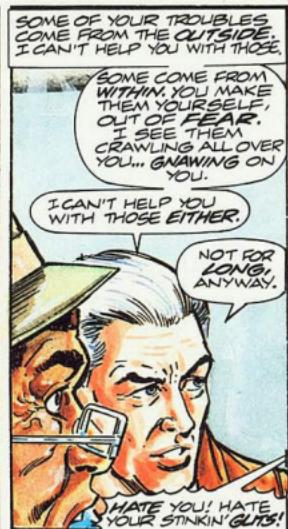
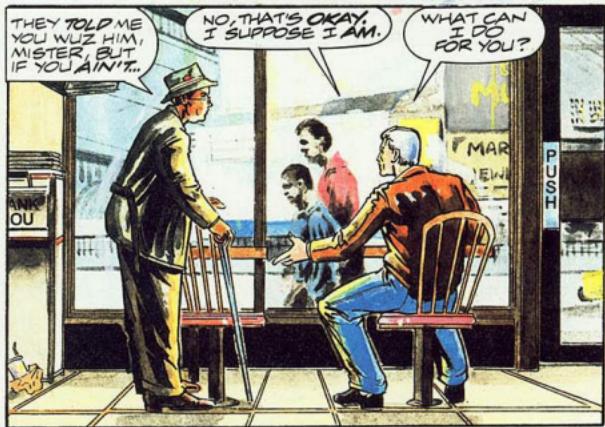
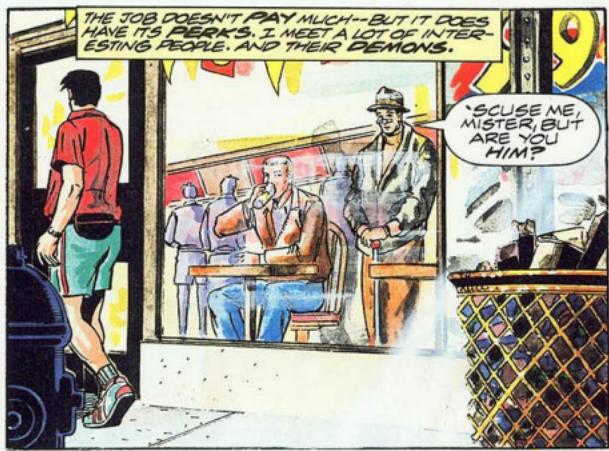
...WELL, THIS IS  
THEIR CITY NOW.

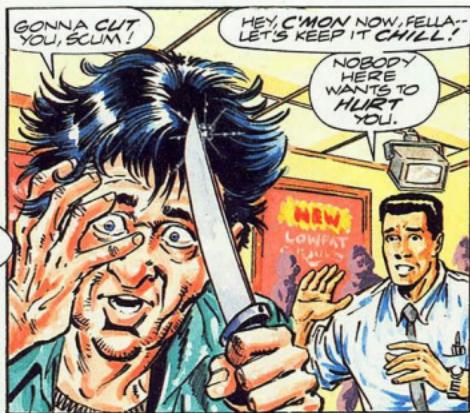
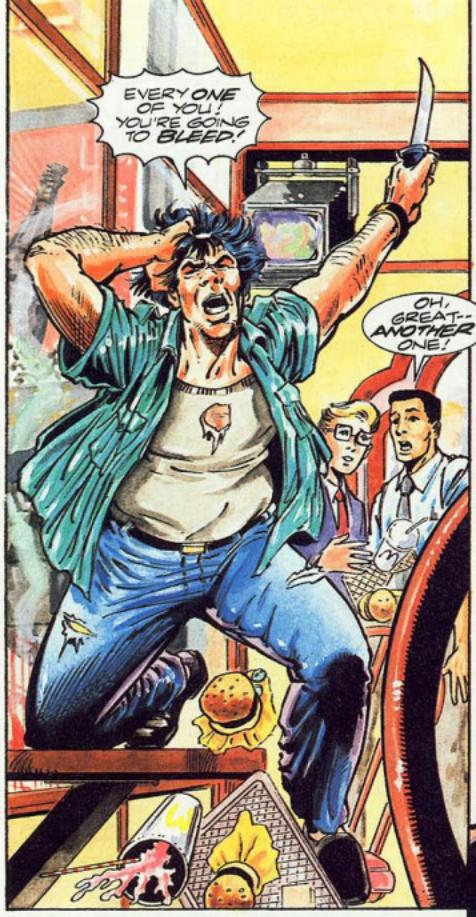
99

I'M TRYING TO  
CHANGE THAT.

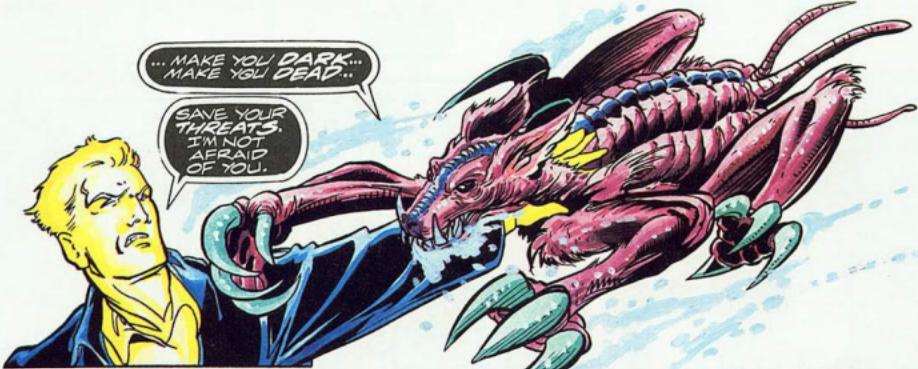
DEVELOPED  
BY  
JIM  
SHOOTER  
AND  
STEVE  
DITKO

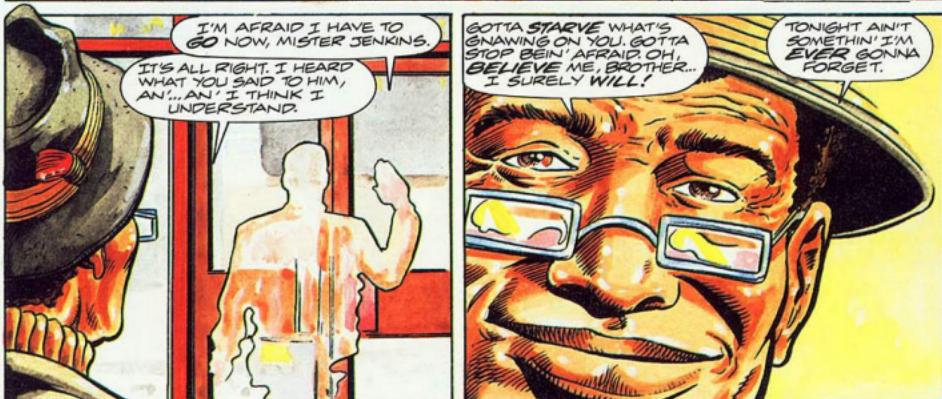
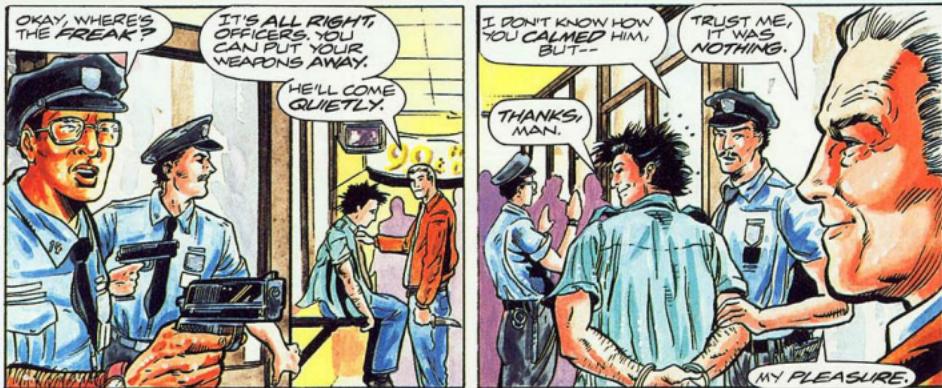
WRITTEN BY LEN WEIN / PENCILED BY JOSEPH A. JAMES  
INKED BY MIKE BARREIRO, BOB DOWNS AND CHARLES YOAKUM  
PAINTED BY TIM PERKINS / LETTERED BY GEORGE ROBERTS  
EDITED BY DEBORAH PURCELL AND ED POLGARDY











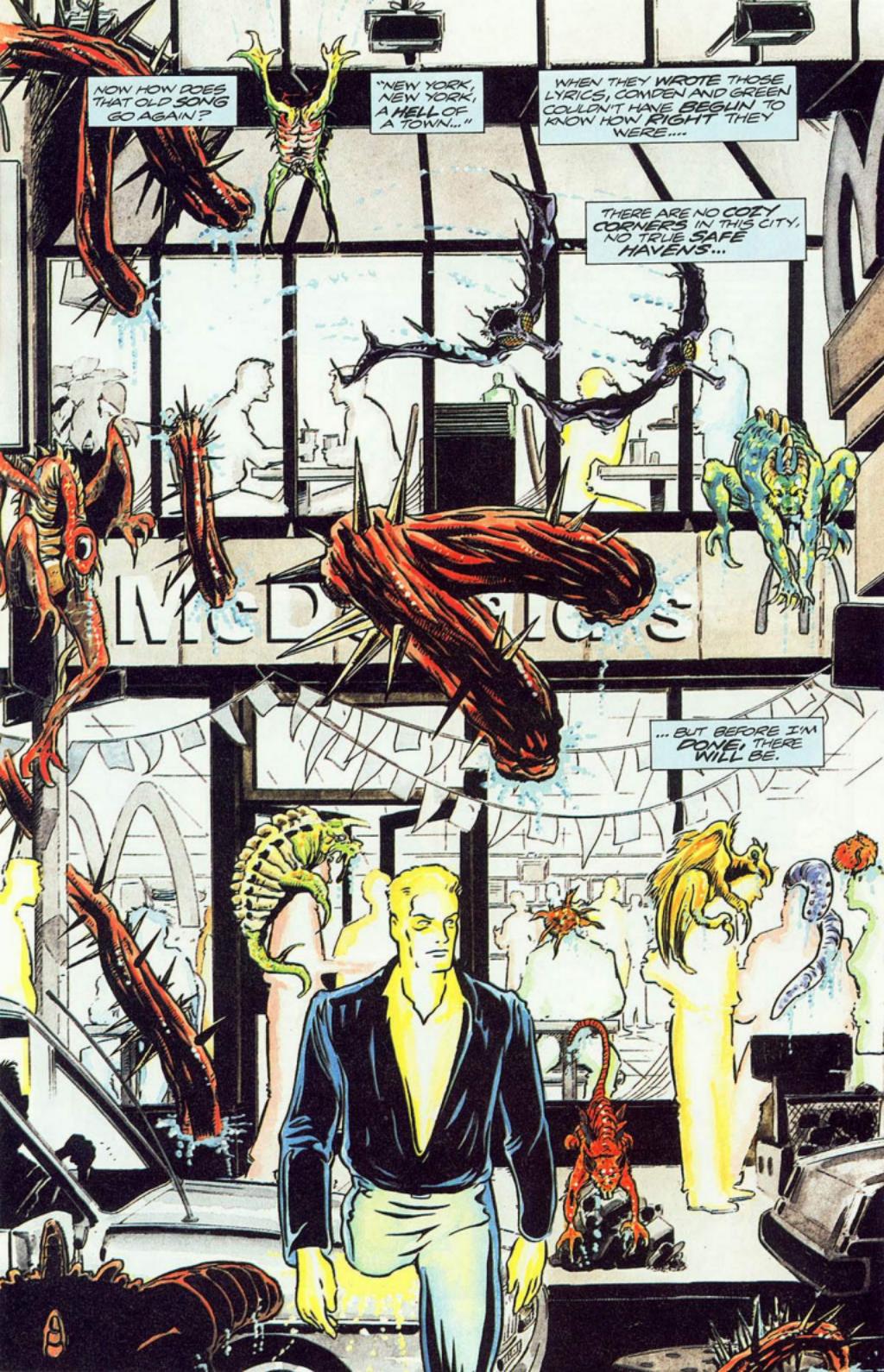
NOW HOW DOES  
THAT OLD SONG  
GO AGAIN?

"NEW YORK,  
NEW YORK,  
A HELL OF  
A TOWN..."

WHEN THEY WROTE THOSE  
LYRICS, COMDEN AND GREEN  
COULDN'T HAVE BEGUN TO  
KNOW HOW RIGHT THEY  
WERE....

THERE ARE NO COZY  
CORNERS IN THIS CITY.  
NO TRUE SAFE  
HAVENS...

BUT BEFORE I'M  
DONE, THERE  
WILL BE.





7:12 P.M.

SO MUCH TO  
LEARN  
IN ONLY ONE  
LIFETIME...

MAISON

...BUT, FORTUNATELY, I'VE  
FOUND A FRIEND TO  
HELP GUIDE ME THROUGH  
THE DARKNESS...



...THOUGH AT TIMES  
SHE SEEMS TO DWELL  
IN A DARKNESS  
ALL HER OWN.

HELLO, MERCY. HOW  
ARE YOU THIS FINE  
EVENING?

YEA, THOUGH I HAVE  
TO WALK THROUGH THE  
VALLEY OF THE SHADOW,  
I AINT GONNA FEAR  
NO EVIL...

...FOR THOU ART  
WITH ME AMONGST  
THE CREEPIES  
AND THE CRAWLIES....

I APPRECIATE THE  
COMPLIMENT.

HERE I BROUGHT  
ALONG YOUR  
USUAL  
BREAKFAST.

SORRY IF IT GOT  
A LITTLE  
SQUASHED.  
IT'S BEEN THAT  
KIND OF  
NIGHT.

TO BE HONEST,  
IT'S BEEN THAT  
KIND OF LIFE  
LATELY.



EVER SINCE I LEARNED TO  
PUT ASIDE MY FEAR AND  
SEE--REALLY SEE--INTO  
THIS STRANGE SUBSTRATUM  
OF REALITY THAT EXISTS  
AROUND US...

...I'VE JUST FOUND MYSELF  
BURDENED WITH A LOT MORE  
QUESTIONS INSTEAD OF  
THE ANSWERS I HOPE  
FOR.

SO LITTLE OF  
WHAT I SEE  
ANYMORE  
IS TRULY  
WHAT IT  
SEEMS.

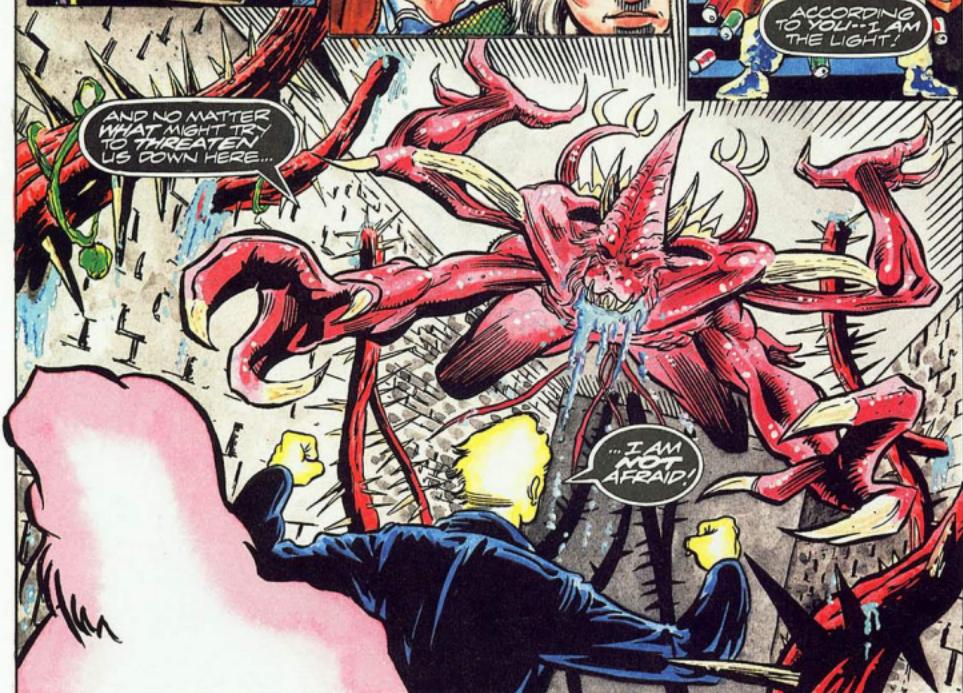


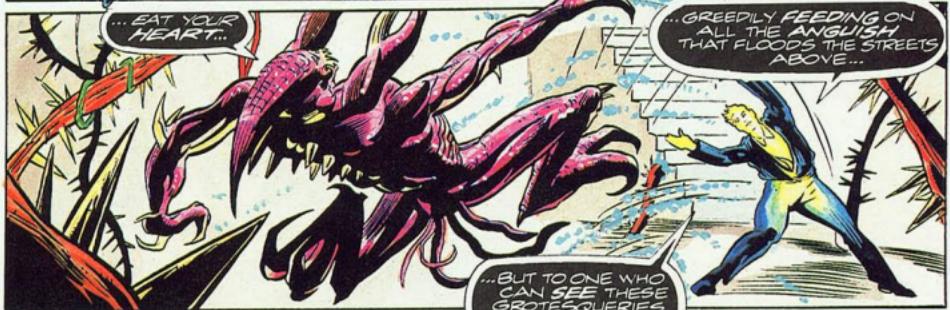
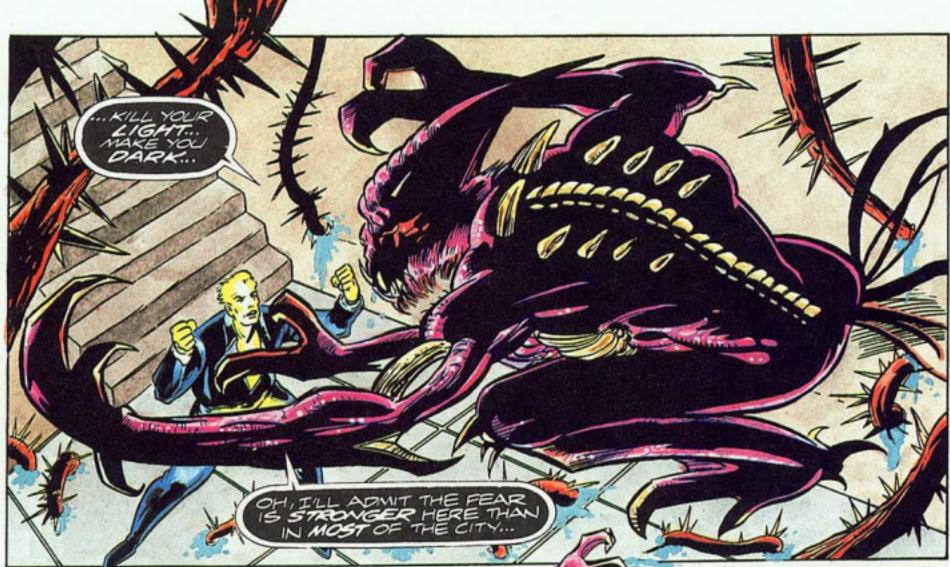
...EAT NOT  
THE FOOD  
DEAD MEN  
EAT...

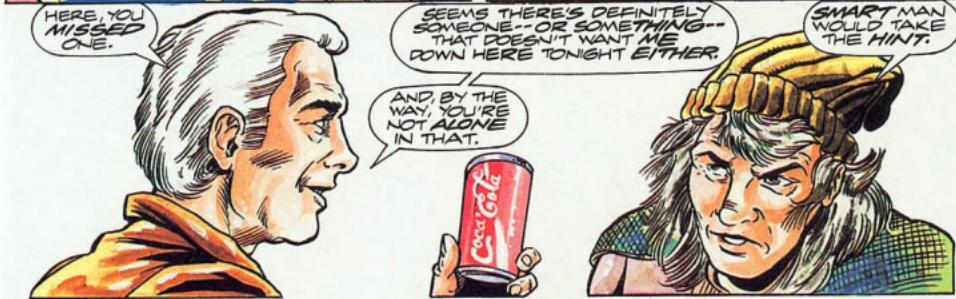






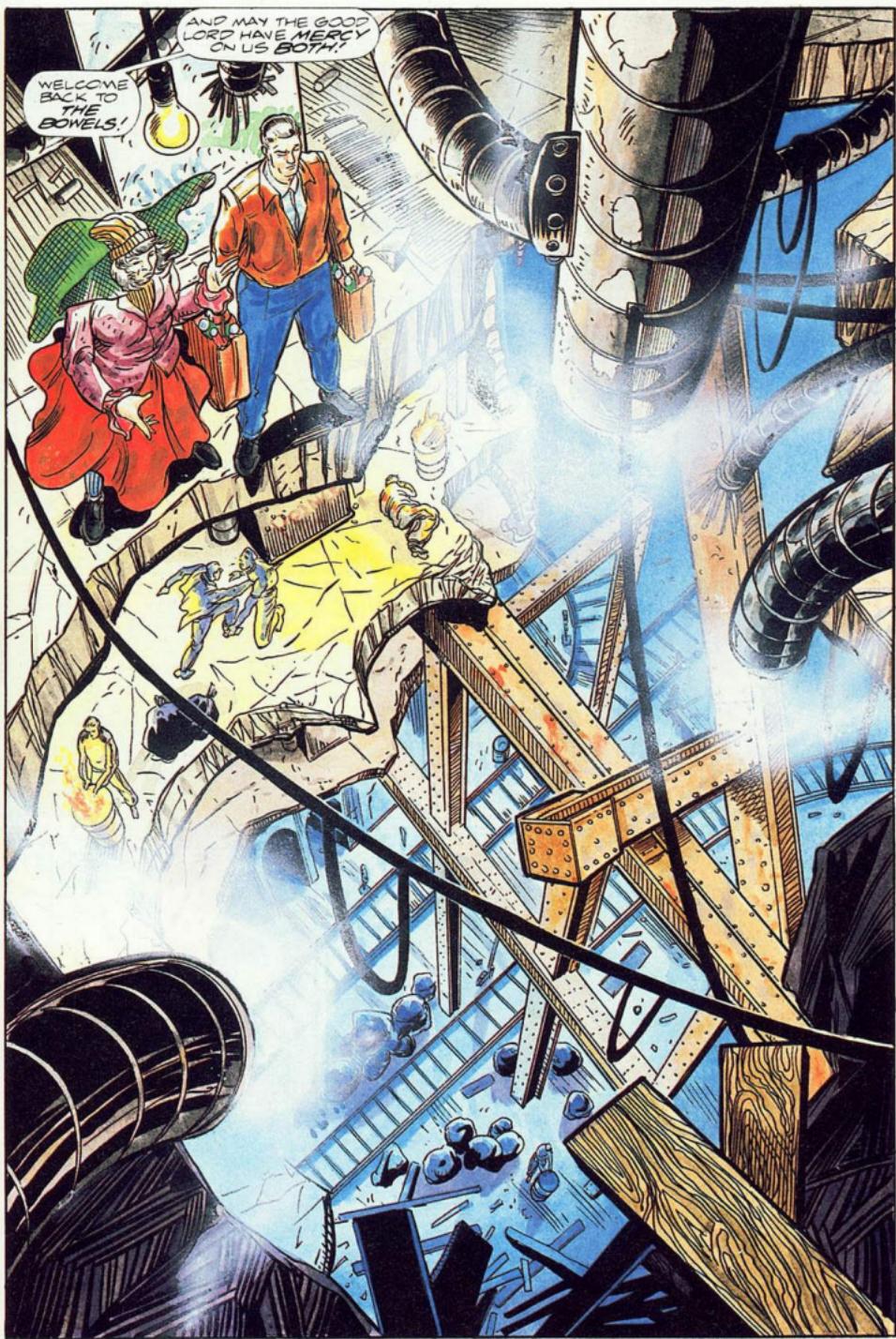


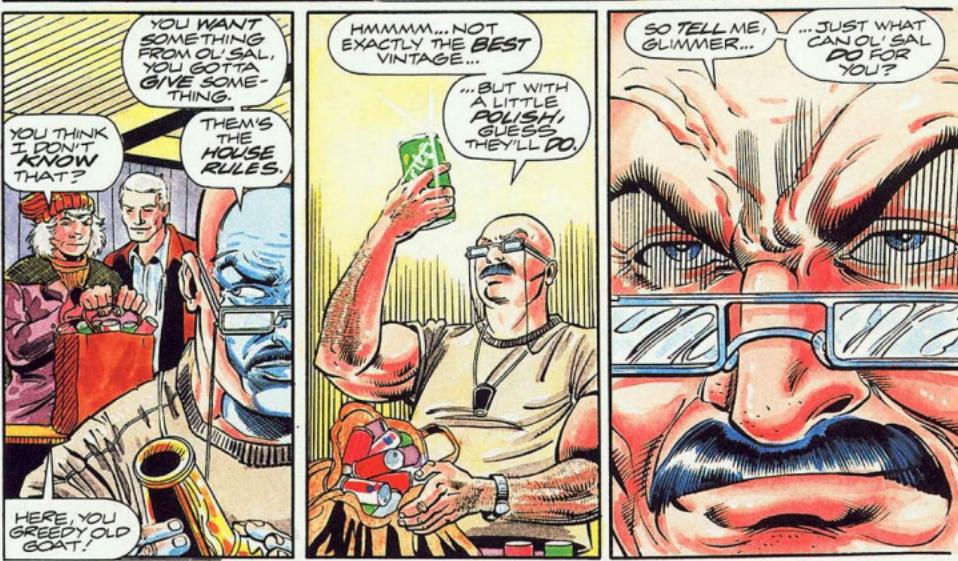


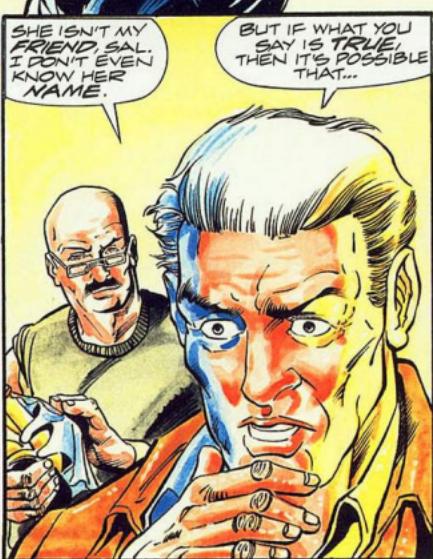
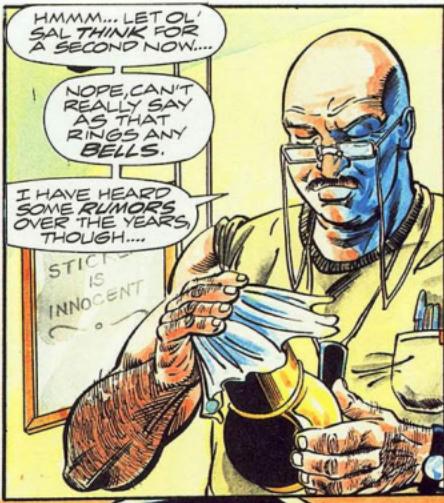


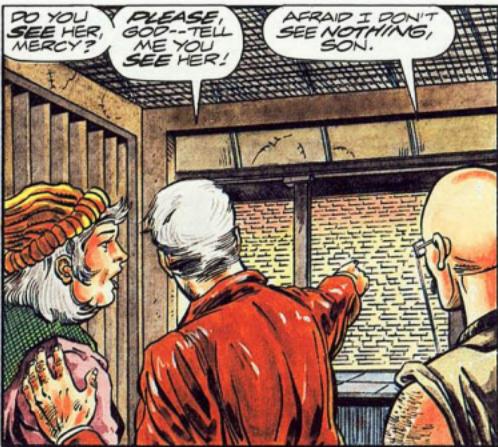
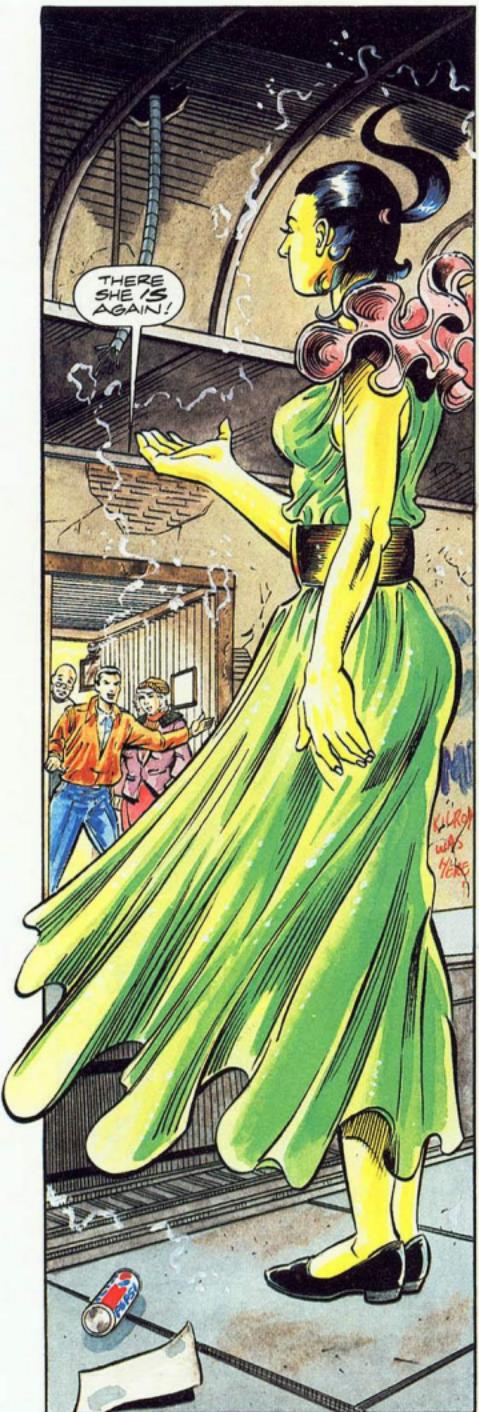
AND MAY THE GOOD  
LORD HAVE MERCY  
ON US BOTH!

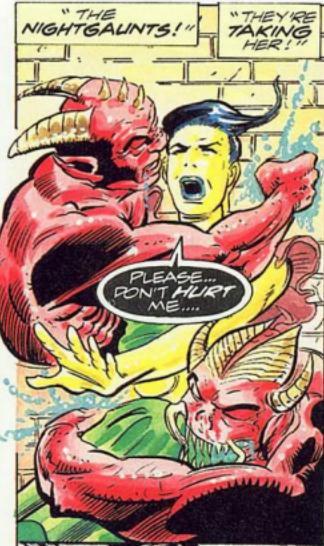
WELCOME  
BACK TO  
THE  
BOWELS!

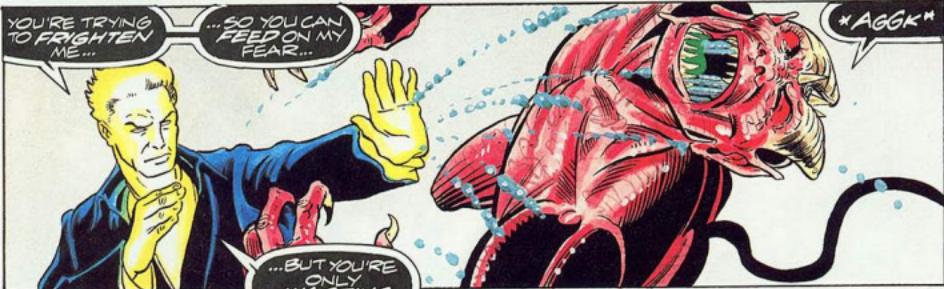


















IF YOU HAVE THE  
NERVE TO FACE  
ME MAN-TO-  
MAN, CHASM...

...MAKE  
YOU  
DARK...

...HERE  
I AM!

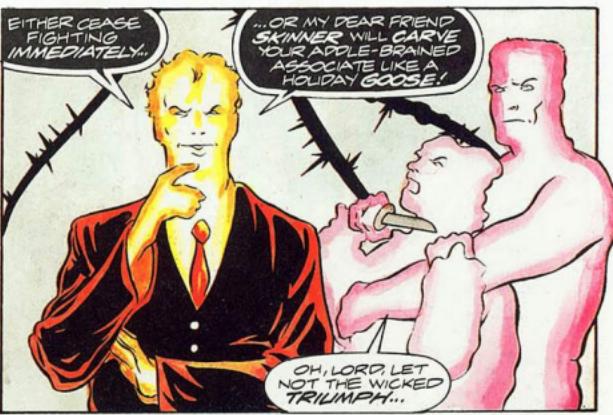
BUT THEN, THAT'S  
NOT REALLY YOUR  
STYLE, IS IT?

...SLICK OUT  
YOUR  
SPIRIT...

NO! YOU'D MUCH  
RATHER STAND  
SAFELY ON THE  
SIDELINES...

...AND LET THESE  
NIGHTMARES  
DO YOUR DIRTY  
WORK!

OKAY, FINE. IF  
THAT'S HOW YOU  
WANT TO PLAY  
IT...



NOT QUITE SO IMPRESSIVE WITH HIS LIGHT TURNED OUT, IS HE?

CLUNK...SKEWER... WOULD YOU PLEASE CARRY OUR UNINVITED GUEST TO THE STEAMPIT?

IT'S REALLY ALMOST A PITY. A WORTHY ADVERSARY MIGHT HAVE PROVED AN ENTERTAINING DISTRACTION...

GENTLEMAN, KINDLY RELIEVE US OF OUR UNWANTED BURDEN.

THE STEAMPIT WILL STRIP THE FLESH FROM HIS BONES IN A MATTER OF MINUTES!



OH, LORD, HAST THOU QUENCHED THE LIGHT IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES?

NO, NOT A LIGHT--AN IRRITATING GLARE...

...BUT ONE THAT HAS FINALLY BEEN EXTINGUISHED!



NEXT ISSUE:  
"LET THERE BE  
LIGHT!"

**HERE IT IS!**

# WARRIORS OF PLASM™

**Zero  
Issue**

## SPECIAL EDITION TIN SET



Authorized by DEFIANT™, The River Group Presents...

A True Limited Edition PLASM™ Collectible! Each Individually Numbered Set Features:

- A full-color, three-level embossed collectible tin, with a lid depicting the four main characters of PLASM!
- The entire 150-card PLASM Zero Issue™ set on super-weight 18 pt. stock!
- A mail-in certificate redeemable for an EXCLUSIVE, brand new 16-page comic book! A new title from Jim Shooter and the folks at DEFIANT, available only with purchase of this tin set!
- A PLASM Level Two #4 of 4 foil card on 14 pt. stock!
- Four special cards featuring characters from upcoming titles in the emerging DEFIANT Universe!
- A Certificate of Limited Edition and message from Jim Shooter!
- Each tin is individually shrink-wrapped.
- Only 25,000 of these sets will exist.

The most collectible cards ever are now featured in one of the most collectible tin sets ever! But once they're gone, they're gone forever! Shooter fans and card collectors alike will crave this rare limited edition set, featuring many hard-to-get and never-before-offered elements. Don't miss out on this remarkable collectible. Ask your retailer today!

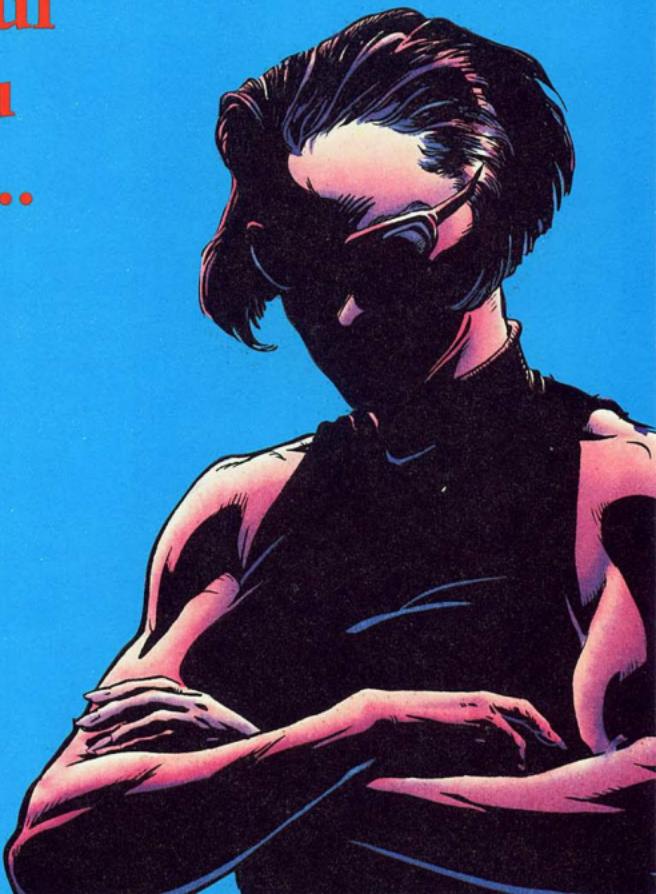


# THE GOOD GUYS

TM

Be careful  
what you  
wish for...

You just  
might  
get it.





# Jim Shooter

## EDITOR IN CHIEF

Welcome to Manhattan. You'll notice that people stare at the sidewalk in front of them as they walk, avoiding even fleeting eye contact. Late at night, on a lonely block, they may cross the street to avoid passing close by you, though it's a well-lit block, though you're well-dressed and unthreatening, though probably hundreds of people are within shouting distance. You step into the elevator in an apartment building. A person already in the elevator cab darts out just before the door closes to avoid riding alone with you, though they've probably seen you before, though they know you've passed the scrutiny of the doorman.

Don't get in trouble here. No one will help you. No one wants to get involved, because then they may wind up in trouble, too, and who's going to help them? They turn their backs, they cross the street, they ignore you.

They're afraid. A palpable fear pervades this town. If you live here, you know it intimately. Anyone who spends much time here soon becomes aware of it. People from other big cities less afflicted sense it instantly. Small-town midwesterners often have to get mugged first. It's not *entirely* paranoia after all.

I've been thinking about this for a long time. I thought about it while sitting in a hearing room once listening to a superficially respectable-looking fellow lying his tail off under oath. As I watched this fellow shifting, sweating and scrambling to keep his dissembling sounding credible, I realized that he was very much afraid. And I realized that it's not the crime and violence in the city that cause the fear—it's the other way around.

It's the unspoken "or else" that lets you understand the way fear drives

evil. Gotta steal it *or else* I'll never get it. Gotta get them *or else* they'll get me. Gotta eat it, have it, do it now, *or else* my one chance will be gone. Gotta look down on everybody *or else* they'll look down on me.

Fear is the root of all evil. Works of evil create the climate for more fear. It's not entirely paranoia....

Somewhere along the line, a balance was tipped, and Manhattan began a long, slow slide into the abyss. I said the fear was palpable. It's getting worse.

Our new title, debuting with this issue, is called **DARK DOMINION™**. It's about Manhattan. It's about fear and evil and the one man who *isn't* afraid. It was created by myself and Steve Ditko, who, of course, created *Doctor Strange* and cocreated *Spider-Man*. It's written by Len Wein, who brought you *The Phantom Stranger*, *Swamp Thing*, and the new *X-Men*. It's drawn by Joe James and inked by Bob Downs and Mike Barreiro. It's powerful, super-action-filled, chilling, intense stuff. It's the cornerstone of the **DEFIANT** universe. I rarely do a salespitch in my column, but this one I especially recommend.

Don't be afraid.

Regarding Marvel's lawsuit against us: The trial is over, and we're waiting for the judge to give us the verdict. I'll let you know what happens. I appreciate the letters of support. Thanks.

In closing, I'd like to offer you these thoughts to ponder:

Ours is a universe governed by quantum mechanics, wherein matter is also energy and particles are also waves.

We are each one a coalescence of forces in the quantum field, an eddy in the stream of timespace—a radiant

nexus of energy, organized into a form that our limited senses perceive as solid matter.

Like a magnet that bends unseen lines of force around itself, which iron filings sprinkled on a piece of paper will betray, we are each one a powerful generator of an unseen nimbus of force.

Given our limited senses, it is difficult to conceive of the quantum nature of things. We bite into an apple—a simple event—but in quantum terms, two fields of energy are interacting, one shearing through the other.

Drops of nectar composed of minute particles, which are also waves, transact with waves, which are also particles, which comprise the sensory structures on our tongues. Then more waves are relayed across a vast distance, relative to the quantum scale, to a central locus, where they trigger a series of reactions. Thus we conceive of the nature of the energy field we have just encountered—we taste the apple.

*Conception is reality* in our quantum universe.

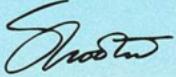
We can conceive far more than we can perceive.

There are exactly as many things in Heaven and Earth as are dreamt of in our philosophy.

All we imagine is real.

Only the limits are imaginary.

Defiantly,



FYM



# WARRIORS OF PLASM™

**COMING IN NOVEMBER...**

**DEFIANT PRESENTS A SPECIAL SEASONAL GIFT:  
“HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS”**

**A GRIPPING, 64-PAGE GRAPHIC NOVEL  
CHRONICLING THE UPHEAVAL OF PLASM  
AND THE FATE OF FIVE HEROES FROM EARTH!  
Written by Len Wein and Drawn by Dave Cockrum.**

**AND DON'T MISS WARRIORS OF PLASM #4—  
THE STUNNING CONCLUSION TO  
“THE SEDITION AGENDA”!**

**Written by Jim Shooter and Drawn by David Lapham.**





# Ed Polgardy

## ASSOCIATE EDITOR

From the moment I read Jim Shooter's script for DARK DOMINION #0, I knew that the series was going to be something special. Jim's story instantly sucked me into Michael Alexander's world, giving me the same rush of excitement I felt on discovering Lee and Ditko's *Spider-Man* back in the late 1960s. Of course, in 1968 I was seven years old, and my mind wasn't clouded with adult sensibilities. As I grew older, I found it increasingly difficult to lose myself in *any* type of fiction, especially in comic book stories that featured inhumanly muscled heroes battling super-powered villains *ad nauseam*, with the fighting taking up about ninety-nine percent of an issue. The vast majority of these super-heroic tales also seemed incomplete, not even offering a linear beginning, middle, and end!

With DARK DOMINION, it's different: The title's protagonist is a modest—and modestly dressed (i.e., no spandex or tights in sight)—man in his early fifties; the other characters populating the story are engagingly realistic; and the multitude of creepy crawlers lurking in the Quantum Substratum are intriguing visual representations of the spiritual demons that have haunted the collective id of humankind since the beginning of time.

And the story...!

I couldn't wait to read more—I was thrilled to be involved with such a fascinating concept.

Even so, giving birth is a painful experience, whether biologically or in the creation, metaphorically speaking, of a new comic-book series.

Len Wein (the cocreator of DC's *Swamp Thing* and the new *X-Men* for Marvel) was brought aboard to write the continuing series, so I knew each

issue would be well-crafted. But Steve Ditko, the original penciler (the same amazing artist who had cocreated the *Spider-Man* comics I loved as a kid!), had decided that he wasn't philosophically comfortable with the concept, and, after delivering his pages for issue #0, he told us that he'd decided not to continue with the book.

The next few weeks were spent hectically trying to line up another penciler. We asked a few well-known artists, but because of the book's deadlines, we couldn't find anyone who could fit it into his already-busy schedule. For a day or two, I thought I had been transported into Michael Alexander's universe: I was starting to feel the Spiders of Anxiety working their way up my spine. Then Deborah Purcell urged Jim Shooter to consider the work of our Production Coordinator, Joe James, who was penciling the backs of some DARK DOMINION #0 character cards. The drawings were top-notch: They were beautifully rendered and captured the look of the series exactly as we had envisioned it. Joe accepted the challenge and immediately began penciling the stellar story you're now holding.

The inking chores for the first issue were shared by Bob Downs and Mike Barreiro, both of whom did a wonderful job.

Add to this list the incredible talent of painter Tim Perkins, and I'm sure you'll agree we've managed to put together one of the best creative teams in comics!

Drop us a line, and let us know what you think.

*Ed Polgardy*



# **SPECIAL OFFER!**

## **WARRIORS OF PLASM #0**

### **1st PRINTING BINDERS**

*Limited to 300 Signed and Numbered Copies.*

#### **BINDERS INCLUDE**

- Jim Shooter Autograph w/ Certificate of Authenticity.
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- The Rare #9 Level One Card.
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(Originally planned as a 2,000-copy edition, this version is limited to only 300 due to severe allocations by our distributor. That makes this item quite rare. Order quickly as supplies are limited.)



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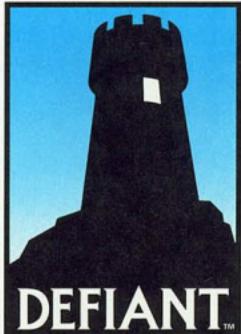
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Level One Cards #1-8	\$9.95 each
Level Two Cards #1-3	\$39.95 each

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THE RIVER GROUP PRESENTS JIM SHOOTER'S

# WARRIORS OF PLASM™

## PREMIUM EDITION TIN SET

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The set contains:

- A full-color three-tiered embossed tin
- The entire 150-card PLASM™ set; each card is foil-stamped and printed on UV-coated, extra-heavy 18 pt. stock! Never-before-offered with foil stamping!
- All 9 Level One and 4 Level Two PLASM random insert foil cards printed on 18 pt. stock! (13 rare cards in all!)
- The PLASM™ Level Two #4 of 4 foil card on 14 pt. stock!
- A one-of-a-kind WORLD PREMIERE comic book on audio cassette! A powerful new story dramatically produced on tape for the first time ever, accompanied by a special story synopsis and its own 4-card set! BONUS: special audio introduction by Jim Shooter!
- An EXCLUSIVE, individually numbered 16-page comic book!
- A Certificate of Limited Edition and special message from Jim Shooter!

The PLASM Premium Edition Tin Set truly commemorates the beginning of the DEFIANT Universe, Jim Shooter's newest and most spectacular creation. Only 5,555 of these sets will be produced. Order yours now for \$169.95.

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GORO LIVES!



LIU KANG'S FIREBALL!



FINISH HIM!



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